

Appl. No. 09/937,265
Atty. Docket No. CM2079
Amdt. dated 11/25/2003
Reply to Office Action of 9/3/03
Customer No. 27752

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 and 12-19 are canceled. Claim 11 has been amended to recite that the composition is : a.) in tablet form; b.) that the tablet comprises a region which is faster-dissolving and a region which is slower-dissolving; and c.) that the faster-dissolving region comprises a higher concentration of the recited acid sensitive clay than the slower-dissolving region. Basis is at page 4, lines 6-17. Claim 20 has been amended to depend from Claim 11.

New Claim 21 recites an enzyme being present in the first region of the tablet. Basis is at page 4, last paragraph.

New Claim 22 recites a flocculant being present in the second region. Basis is at page 5, lines 7-11.

New Claim 23 recites the presence of bleach in the second region. Basis is at page 5, lines 1-6.

It is submitted that these amendments add no new matter, and entry is requested.

Objections to the Specification

The Specification has been objected to, for reasons of record at page 2 of the Office Action.

The Abstract has been amended to conform with MPEP 608.01(b) and to be more descriptive, but not limiting of, the claims now in the case.

The Specification has been amended at:

- a) page 21, third line from last;
- b) page 22, lines 9, 20 and 21;
- c) page 24, lines 11-12;
- d) page 25, fourth line from last;
- e) page 27, line 20

to either update the documents cited, or to remove the citations as constituting matter which is non-essential to the present invention.

It is submitted that the Amendments presented herewith meet all objections. Withdrawal of the objections is requested.

Rejections Under 35 USC 102

Claim 11 stands rejected as anticipated by JP 56167798, and, separately, over JP 57167454, for reasons of record at page 3 of the Office Action.

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Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections on this basis, to the extent they may apply to the claims now in the case.

It is submitted that neither JP '798 nor JP '454 teaches detergents in tablet form comprising two regions: a discrete faster-dissolving first region and a slower-dissolving second region, wherein the clay is more highly concentrated in the first (faster dissolving) region, than in the second (slower dissolving) region.

Since neither JP '798 nor JP '454 teaches these elements of the present invention, it is submitted that all rejections under §102 should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Rejections of Claims 12-13 Under 35 USC 102/103

Claims 12-13 stand rejected under §§102/103, for reasons of record at page 4 of the Office Action.

The cancellation of Claims 12-13 has obviated these rejections.

Rejections of Claims 14-17 Under 35 USC 103

Claims 14-17 stand rejected under §103, for reasons of record at pages 4-5 of the Office Action.

The cancellation of Claims 14-17 has obviated those rejections.

Rejections of Claims 18-20 Under 35 USC 103

Claims 18-20 stand rejected over JP '798, as earlier applied, in further view of U.S. 6,313,080, for reasons of record at pages 6-7 of the Office Action.

The cancellation of Claims 18 and 19 has obviated the rejections of those claims.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection, as it may apply to Claim 20, as amended herewith. (For the record, Claim 11 has not been rejected over this combination of references.)

As noted at page 6 of the Office Action, JP '798 fails to disclose the detergent composition in tablet form, and the use of higher amounts of clay in the first region. However, the clay disclosures of JP '798 have been combined with U.S. '080 to, assertedly, arrive at the present invention under §103.

It is respectfully submitted that this misapprehends the clear teachings of '080.

The two-layer clay-containing tablets ("discrete regions") of '080 are disclosed at Column 10, line 13, through Column 11, line 55. In these tablets, the clay is in Component B (16.0% clay; Col. 10, l. 23). No clay is shown as being present in Component A.

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At Column 11, l. 52-55, the patentees clearly state that, "When the tablets are added to water the first layer of composition A [i.e., no clay] disintegrates first, because of the presence of sodium citrate dihydrate." [Emphasis supplied]

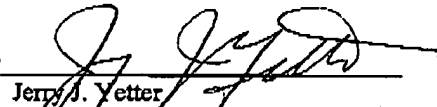
It is submitted that this is the exact opposite of the tablet of the present invention, wherein the region containing the higher concentration of the acid sensitive clay dissolves first.

It is further submitted that nothing in '080 teaches or suggests the desirability of having the high clay layer dissolve first, in the manner of the present invention. This is true, irrespective of the type of clay used in the tablet. Thus, the disclosure of clays in JP '798 adds nothing to U.S. '080 in regard to the present invention, in the sense of §103. Said another way, simply combining JP '798 with U.S. '080 still leads to a tablet wherein the clay layer dissolves second, rather than first, as in the present invention. Accordingly, it is submitted that the rejection on this combination of references should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, early and favorable action in the case is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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